

ETHNOARCHAEOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL FRONTIERS: ATHAPASKAN, ALGONQUIAN AND EUROPEAN ADAPTATIONS IN THE CENTRAL SUBARCTIC. By HETTY JO BRUMBACH and ROBERT JARVENPA. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., American University Studies, Series XI, Anthropology and Sociology, Vol. 20. 325 p. US\$46.50.

This book uses ethnoarchaeology to examine the basic biological and ecological processes underpinning cross-cultural interaction between the Metis/Cree, Chipewyan, and Euro-Canadians involved in the late-19th- and early-20th-century fur trade along the upper Churchill River. As has become the habit of many northern researchers, the authors have used a very broad definition of ethnoarchaeology, which allowed their methodology to include historic sites archaeology, archival records from the fur trade, and ethnographic data that included both memory culture and ongoing behavior. Information collected from these divergent sources was guided by and interpreted against a series of four linked hypotheses that served to "... provide a sort of 'connective tissue' between theoretical and empirical domains" (p. 4). Simply stated, these hypotheses are 1) European traders caused a gravitation of the Cree and Chipewyan toward common ground. This resulted in increased stress, which caused their niches to be modified. 2) Inter-species relations and niche definition will be exhibited in inter-ethnic relations through time. 3) The perspective of animal ecology that interactions between species can be classed as positive, negative, or neutral can be used as a broad analogical framework for inter-ethnic relations between groups living near the Churchill drainage. 4) Socioeconomic dominance in the system led to different ecological and economic positions within the trade.

Though these hypotheses, which are in fact much more complex than represented here, may have provided the authors with an interesting starting point and a straw man against which to test their data, they do not provide a strong thread throughout the book. The Hudson's Bay Company Archives, archaeological survey, and ethnographic data provided Brumbach and Jarvenpa with a wealth of data, the analysis of which has certainly benefited from the researchers' adherence to a structure. In the end, however, the questions they originally sought answers to were more precise than the new knowledge gained from their quest, and hence the hypotheses are only analyzed in passing in the conclusion.

This is in no way to diminish the contribution of their work or its significance. Science is commonly built on the shoulders of experiments that went astray and in the process led to greater discoveries. Brumbach and Jarvenpa dealt with an impressive array of variables. For archaeologists, their attempt to compare the trading of prepared foods between post inventories and the archaeological record will certainly influence subsequent work. Changing patterns of seasonal movement and shifting home ranges described for the Metis/Cree and Chipewyan are important beyond the parameters of their study area. Attitudes toward bush vs. post life, overland travel vs. adherence to waterways, and isolated solo encampments compared to communal kin-based communities are all features of post-contact subarctic settlement patterns. Similar problems are dealt with and pondered by most anthropologists working in the northern forests, be they ethnologists, ethnohistorians, or ethnoarchaeologists.

The work is well researched and scrupulously presented. Although interpretations will be debated, certainly the soundness and quality of the research is above question. Perhaps future editions of the book will have given the authors time to reflect on their analysis and provide them the opportunity to more fully address their original hypotheses.

I am personally bothered by the appearance of books that are based on pages that are quality reproductions of reduced typed text. On the other hand, academic publications have small circulations and often very heavy price tags, so compromises on typesetting are inevitable. The editing of this book is quite good, but by no means

perfect. Plates, charts, and tables are well done and clearly reproduced.

Ethnoarchaeological and Cultural Frontiers is a work that will certainly be widely used as a reference by subarctic specialists. The long-term users will be researchers concerned with the Native people of northern Saskatchewan. While reading, I tried to do comparisons with my own work among the Dene of the Mackenzie drainage area and with the Cree along the Hayes River to determine if Brumbach and Jarvenpa's findings had wider applicability. Many of their observations on the contact process appear not only consistent in the broader picture, but may lead other researchers along some new and productive avenues of thought. Students who take the time to read the work will discover the richness of the Subarctic. It is a work well worth adding to one's library, as it inspires notes in the margins and dog-eared pages at favorite references.

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THE ASCENT OF DENALI. By HUDSON STUCK. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1989. (Originally published in 1914 by Charles Scribners Sons.) 188 p. Hardbound, US\$22.95; softbound, US\$8.95.

After 27 years of reading climbing adventure books, I must admit that I am a bit jaded and hard to please. Yet I found myself, after sitting down for a brief glance at Archdeacon Stuck's book, three hours later nearly finished with it. It was thoroughly absorbing and entertaining.

The book gives the account of the first complete ascent of Denali (otherwise known as Mount McKinley). The participants are Hudson Stuck (Archdeacon of the Yukon), Harry Karstens (an Alaskan adventurer), Robert Tatum (a postulant for holy orders) and Walter Harper (an Alaskan of mixed race). The year is 1913.

Between March and June of that year, these four adventurers made the arduous approach to Denali, climbed the main (south) summit (20 320 feet) via the Muldrew Glacier route, then descended and made their way on foot through the tundra and forests back to civilization. Although the work and discomfort must have been immense, the foursome appears to have weathered the labours with little trouble. Perhaps they made men tougher in those days, and, of course, climbing Denali may not have been much more difficult than pioneering in the frigid Alaskan winters, anyways.

Throughout the narrative I was struck by the simple and innocent attitude to mountaineering shown by the foursome. They were indeed climbing the mountain for the simple joy of adventure, with no ulterior motives. Stuck's comments on reaching the summit were that "There was no pride of conquest, no trace of that exultation of victory some enjoy upon the first ascent of a lofty peak, no gloating over good fortune that had hoisted us a few hundred feet higher than others who had struggled and been discomfited. Rather was the feeling that a privileged communion with the higher places of the earth had been granted" (p. 108).

Stuck also stands out in his support for the native people of Alaska. He begins the book with a plea for the return to the original Indian name, Denali (The Great One). Throughout the book he makes impassioned pleas for the respect and proper treatment of our indigenous North Americans. His concern for the two Indian boys, Esaias and Johnny Fred, who assisted them in their adventure is genuine and touching.